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No. 670 Twopence August, 1959

THE UNITARIAN

A MAGAZINE FOR FREE CHRISTIANS

"Haven't you told them that apprentices are not involved in disputes?"

Editorial

We are sorry that this month's issue is only half size. However, the regular features and main articles will all appear in a "bumper" edition in September.

The Editorial Board had made plans to duplicate the August issue. We are very grateful to our printers for making this course unnecessary.

AN EXPERIMENT AT KENDAL

By Tom Wardle

It is one thing for people to reply to a religious advertisement in a national newspaper; it is quite another thing for them to join a church. How do we get them to do so; more importantly, how do we get more of the people who do not reply to newspapers to join? There is a deep-seated suspicion of churches. People feel that once they put their head inside they are somehow committed, and if they go three or four times on the trot they fear they might be regarded as owing an obligation to the place or the faith.

One answer to the problem of introducing people gradually has been to suggest that they came to social activities of the church. Yet many people do not care for social activities, or else they feel they cannot make the contact with the *religious* condition of the church through going to whist drives. They thus appear faced with the choice of going to church to find out and so feeling committed before they have had a chance to discover the meaning of Unitarianism (and more especially, the atmosphere of a Unitarian congregation) or staying away altogether.

A method of overcoming this difficulty which we have found highly successful at Kendal is the Saturday morning Coffee Club. This is held in our Chapel Rooms or on the lawn when it is sunny. Gay tables, good coffee and light music set the atmosphere. An artistic notice board invites the public in. There is a slide for the children and an Opportunity Stall for the sale of oddments. Settees and a good fire give the place a cosy look. Travel posters adorn the walls. From small beginnings we have now built up a regular clientele of about fifty to sixty each week. There are always about half-a dozen newcomers each week, so the number of people who make contact with the Chapel in this way during the year will run into hundreds.

The important point is not just that this is a way of cementing the fellowship of the existing congregation or providing an occasion of social intercourse which is good in itself, it is that such a situation

makes possible an introduction to the pastoral and religious work of the Chapel in a direct and leisurely way which enables the inquirer to find out about us after his own fashion without the sense of personal involvement that attendance at a Chapel service implies, for him.

Coming to the Coffee Club is not like coming to a whist drive or a social. It is much less deliberate. It infers no more sympathy with our cause than a readiness to drink our coffee. The visitor pays for his coffee and feels himself as independent of attachments to us as he would in a commercial cafe; but he knows that this is not a commercial cafe. Here he can stay as long as he likes; here he can always find someone to talk to; here he is surrounded by gaiety and good feeling.

In addition, the minister and his wife, the hostesses for the morning, and members of the congregation will move among the guests chatting to them all. No attempt is made to proselytize.

It is not surprising that in this informal atmosphere matters of the deepest pastoral concern are raised. Members of the public show a humbling readiness to discuss personal problems with the minister and indeed with members of the community. The Chapel is open for private use.

We have been grateful for the many visits paid by members of other denominations in the town, by holiday travellers, by youngsters wanting a romp in the garden and older ones a sit by the fire. We have tried to open our community to the people of our neighbourhood with no questions asked. Though we strive to do this without ulterior motive we do not deny the joy we feel when the faces we first saw at the coffee tables begin appearance in the pews.

UNITARIANS IN THE NEWS

The Gloucester "Citizen" report that the fifteen-year-old idea o Miss Olive Matthews for "granny flats" has at last materialised. Th idea was to provide self-containe bed-sitting annexes for elderl people, attached to the homes o their relatives. In June the first o these "plus-granny" flats was offi cially opened by the Mayor of Wa sall.

Miss Pauline Young and he mother provide news in a recen edition of the "Daily Herald. Pauline, a former Rose Queen o Brookfield Church, was returnin from church in her robes of offic when a trailer freed itself from passing vehicle and knocked dow her and her mother. Fortunately neither was seriously hurt.

Headings on the front page of th "Horwich News Bulletin" early i July were "Unitarian Minister t go" "Ash bin man sacked" an "New full-back." The first heade an article that referred to the fac that Mrs Joyce Hazlehurst is t leave Horwich at the end of Septem ber to go to Waverley Roa Birmingham. Mention was made o the "tremendous progress" whic has been made at Horwich durin Miss Hazlehurst's ministry.

"Ex-R.A.F. rear-gunner, the Re Frederick Barr, has been giving h women parishioners this advic "Don't wear your soberist clothes t Church. Dress up and have a hai do. A frumpish appearance doesn mean you are a better Christian This extract is from the "News o the World" of June 14. Mr. Barr Unitarian Minister at Rochdale.

Following the doctor's recom mendation the Rev. C. G. Toone h resigned the Pastorate of Newton A bot, Devon, but is to continue wit that of Moretonhampstead. M Toone has also resigned as Scribe o

the Exeter Assembly of Devon Divines.

The Rev. C. A. Piper has returned to the ministry with joint charge of Hamilton Road, Liverpool and Bootle. Mr. Piper resigned from the ministry in 1955 because of progressively worsening arthritis. However, after following doctor's instructions for two years the pains were decreasing and eventually disappeared. With the restoration of health Mr. Piper returned to the ministry at 70 years of age.

NEWS AND VIEWS

In spite of extra seats in the hall and on the stage many people had to stand throughout the opening service at **Wythenshawe** in June. More than 350 people attended. The President of the G.A. performed the opening and preached the address in the presence of the Lord Mayor of Manchester. The service was conducted by the minister, the Rev. John Gill.

Cross Street Chapel was full for the Valediction of Messrs, D. Dunkley, L. Hallworth, W. McMillan, M.A. and D. Smith, former students of U.C.M. The President of the G.A. preached the Valedictory address.

The preacher at the Lancashire and Cheshire Provincial Assembly held at Mill Street Mission, Liverpool was the Rev. M. Bonner.Delegates were welcomed by the Mayor of Liverpool. In his address, the retiring President, Mr. M. H. Winder, said that we must educate ourselves to lead public opinion. Mr. Winder made an impassioned and well-reasoned plea against Britain's right to "Press the button of nuclear warfare," and for Western aid to develop foreign and Commonwealth countries. Rev. K. Twinn was elected President for the coming year, and Miss Joyce Hazlehurst preacher.

Newchurch Sunday School Anniversary saw a packed church for all services and "the splendid result of £480 was acheived."

Throughout July several parts of the country have been pleased to welcome Dr. Ernest Kuebler, Director of Education for the Council of Liberal Churches in America. Dr. Kuebler has spoken in many places about religious education in America, and the methods used.

"Our Church has been offered few, if any, opportunities by the B.B.C. to broadcast during the year. Thus, the voice of the most progressive church in Ireland has been strangely silent. But on the other hand due recognition of our existence has been given by Her Majesty the Queen and His Excellency the Governor on several occasions." This was part of the report to the Synod of the Moderator, the Right Rev. John W. Dyer, who was reappointed for a second year of office. Several matters of public interest were debated at the meetings of the Synod.

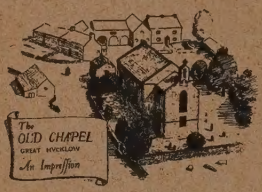
At the 34th Annual Meeting of the Woman's League, (Western District) held at Sidmouth. Mrs. H. Whitaker was elected President. Mrs. Howarth M.A. gave the address.

The Rev. Preston Bradley preached at Bath and Trowbridge in July.

The summer meeting of the Devon Unitarian Congregations Association was held at Sidmouth on Wednesday, July 15. The speaker was the Rev. D. Meyer-Klugel, B.A. B.D.

At BRIGHTON the "Under 45 Group," which is a flourishing institution at Brighton, has heard of two very different kinds of Unitarians. The Rev. W. Waddington, who visited the United States for the I.A.R.F. Conference last year, gave a talk on his impressions, containing much detail of the Unitarian Churches on the other side of the Atlantic. In contrast was the Rev. Mabel Beames' talk about her stay of several months with the Rev. Margaret Barr in Assam. At the latter meeting a collection was held, as a result of which 30s. was sent to the India Fund.

Northern S.S. Federation UNITARIAN HOLIDAY HOMES



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